

A NEW EDITION corrected, with ADDITIONS

L O U I S A ;

OR, THE

COTTAGE ON THE MOOR.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

——— “ Ye good distrest !
“ Ye noble few ! who here unbending stand
“ Beneath life's pressure ; yet bear up awhile ;
“ And what your bounded view, which only saw
“ A little part, deem'd evil, is no more !
“ The storms of wintry time will quickly pass,
“ And one unbounded spring encircle all.”

V O L. I.

L O N D O N :

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P R E F A C E

TO THE

FIRST EDITION.

THOUGH introductory matter, at the first view, may appear very simple, yet an intelligent reader will readily admit the necessity of it : indeed, from its very general use in the world, we may term it highly essential. To prove this figuratively, we will suppose a timid visitor making a first appearance amidst a group of fashionable belles and beaux, who, in spite of every modest external, loudly join in censuring the poor stranger, because he or she happens to fall under the unlucky predicament of being one, that—nobody knows. An
admired

admired author says, " A composition that enters the world with a view of improving or amusing it, has a claim to our utmost indulgence, even though it fail of the effect intended." More might be said on the subject; but if we believe the asseverations of some eminent publishers, Essay-writing is totally out of fashion; character, or rather caricatura, is now the rage. For my own part, I am not fashionable enough to enjoy the outré part of the creation; therefore shall content myself with exposing vice only; as for harmless absurdity, it should ever rest in good-nature's lap.

I doubt not but there are among the number of those, who may cast a glance on my rural building, many who prefer a more exalted and dignified structure: need such to be told, cottages were prior to palaces? that the beauty and regularity

rity of architecture were not the work of a day? This considered, candid criticism will relax a little of its severity in favour of a female candidate, whose errors (I trust) are those of the head, not the heart. Men of might, be merciful!—let not the torrent of your disapprobation sweep away my humble dwelling, nor expose with a too harsh severity the imperfections of my fabrick to eyes less discerning than your own.

To my fair readers, I need say little: virtue and humanity are the natural growth of their bosoms: conscious that neither of these heavenly attributes will receive the least check from my Louisa, I doubt not their candour; and if my heroine merit one tear of sensibility, I shall be amply satisfied.

It remains now only to say, that as natural fiction, judiciously blended with diversity, is the most agreeable characteristic of Novel-writing, that relation must be doubly pleasing, which boasts of out-lines founded in truth, and can point to living examples of suffering virtue (in the end) meeting their due reward.

This edition is divided into chapters, mottoes added to each, and the whole carefully revised.

C O N T E N T S

OF THE

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SENSIBILITY.

Dear Sensibility! source inexhausted of all that's precious in our joys, or costly in our sorrows! thou chainest thy martyr down upon his bed of straw—and 'tis thou who lifts him up to HEAVEN!—Eternal fountain of our feelings! 'tis here I trace thee.

S. Journey, p. 226.

L O U I S A;
O R, T H E
COTTAGE ON THE MOOR.

C H A P. I.

A Wanderer.

Night, sable goddess, from her ebon throne,
In rayless majesty, now stretches forth
Her leaden scepter o'er a slumb'ring world.
Silence how dead! and darkness, how profound!
Nor eye, nor list'ning ear, an object finds!
Creation sleeps. 'Tis as the gen'ral pulse
Of life stood still, and nature made a pause;
An awful pause! prophetic of her end.

YOUNG'S NIGHT THOUGHTS.

AT the foot of a high hill, on
a large tract of barren land,
known by the name of Stanmore,
about seven miles from Kendal, in

VOL. I. B the

the county of Westmoreland, stood a small cot, whose thatched roof tempted not the midnight robber; nor yet whose penurious aspect seemed to refuse (in this dreary spot) comfort to the distressed traveller.

On a frosty night, the latter end of December (when the mild radiance of the moon, to a mind at ease, might have made even this rough scene delightful)—the inhabitants of the cottage were disturbed by a loud knocking, which was answered by a female voice, who from a window in the upper story demanded the reason of this

this late alarm ! Accents which at once bespoke pity, and claimed from the humanized mind immediate succour, reached the ear of the interrogator to the following purport :—" Alas ! if you refuse me entrance, here must I perish. I have wandered amidst these wilds till cold has almost deprived me of sensation." The stranger ceased.—The hospitable wicket opened wide, and discovered to the pitying portress a female sinking with fatigue ; the succouring arm of Mary (for so was the attendant of the cottage named) was immediately held out. —" Fear not, Madam, said she,

lean on me, I will conduct you to my mistress, who will gladly afford every assistance in her power." With feeble step and slow the benighted stranger reached the apartment of the mistress of this humble mansion, who rose to receive, and welcome her unexpected guest; then turning to Mary, ordered her to bring some warm wine, and mend the half extinguished fire. Mary had a heart that needed no prompting to tenderness and humanity, her mistress was therefore immediately obeyed.

When the stranger had taken some refreshment, and vital warmth diffused

diffused itself on her limbs, she returned such thanks as convinced Mrs. Rivers, (the mistress of the cottage) that her prepossessions in favour of her new guest were not ill founded. The ladies now had leisure to examine each other, though not with the supercilious eye of envy with which the modern Belle observes her contemporary in dress and fashion: here every fresh glance discovered a new grace, or additional virtue, such is the power of sympathy on uncorrupted minds. The stranger found her entertainer possessed of beauty, though at the age of thirty-six, nor was it lessened by

the plain mourning habit she wore. Native dignity shone conspicuous, though woe had strongly marked her lovely features with his iron traits. The fair wanderer (who was named Louisa) appeared to Mrs. Rivers about seventeen; she was tall and elegantly formed, her complexion of the most transparent fairness, her lovely down-cast blue eyes seemed sureties that innocence and virtue dwelt within. The pale blush of her cheek was admirably contrasted by the vermilion of her lips, which opened on rows of pearl; bright auburn locks (whose ringlets needed not the assistance of art) fell negligently on her

her

her snowy neck ; in fine, she was loveliness itself, without the aid of ornament.

For some moments, did the humane Mrs. Rivers survey the lovely distressed in silent sorrow, her furcharged heart overflowing in pearly drops to think so delicate a form should be exposed to the dangers of the night and inclemency of the season ; curiosity, though in general predominant in a female breast, was here absorbed by gentle pity. This tender sensation was however changed into a sudden start, and look of horror, on perceiving several spots of

B 4 blood

blood on the fair stranger's habit; and her inquiring eye seemed to demand explanation of what she almost dreaded to hear!—Mrs. Rivers's strong emotion was not unobserved by Louisa, who casting her eye downward, perceived the cause: "You have seen, Madam, said she, what till this moment was unknown to myself; think not unfavourably of me if I appear confused, it is not from conscious guilt, but the recollection of dangers which I have this night escaped; this blood was shed in a moment of desperation, to preserve a wretched girl her only possession." "Alas!" returned Mrs. Rivers,

Rivers, can any thing authorize a deed so shocking to humanity?"—" Yes, Madam, replied Louisa, the defence of innocence and virtue ; but for that wound, which, however, I hope is slight, I had been deprived of both. If I have not already too far trespassed on your goodness, I will relate the cause of my appearing before you in this strange situation, and at so late an hour."

The innocence of Louisa's manner, and readiness to satisfy any doubt, pleaded strongly with Mrs. Rivers (in whose bosom she had a powerful advocate from the first moment of their meeting.)—" Not

to-night, said that lady, your exhausted strength and spirits require rest. If you can spare a little time from happier connections, I shall be much pleased with your company at the cottage." Louisa raised her eyes to heaven, deeply sighed, bowed her thanks, and retired with Mary, who waited to light her to her chamber.

(11)

CHAP. II.

Friendship.

Tir'd Nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep,
He, like the world, his ready visit pays
Where fortune smiles; the wretched he forsakes;
Swift on his downy pinion flies from woe,
And lights on lids unsully'd with a tear.

YOUNG'S NIGHT THOUGHTS.

ON Mary's return, she found her mistress lost in thought, which she interrupted by exclaiming " Bless me, Madam, do you recollect any one like this young lady ?" " No," returned Mrs. Rivers; " Then, Madam, replied Mary, you must have forgot yourself, when about her age, for the former part of your

life is renewed in her every look and motion." Mary awakened a painful sensation, and recalled affliction gave its accustomed tribute—a tear. "Let us hope, Mary, said the good lady, a happier fortune than mine awaits her, whatever may be the resemblance of our persons."

Mary, though in a station of life inferior to Mrs. Rivers, had a heart replete with goodness, and sincerely accorded with that lady in her well-wishes to the fair stranger whom they did not fail to remember in their orisons to that Power who sometimes (for his own wise purposes)

poses) may chastise, but is never deaf to the prayer of the virtuous.

And now, for a few hours, the inhabitants of this lonely cot were lost in silence, though sleep refused its soft dominion over Mrs. Rivers and her fair guest; the former reflected with amazement on the strangeness of her meeting with so lovely a girl, and, if for a moment the idea withdrew itself, a heavy sigh from the latter (from whom she was only separated by a slight partition) again gave it fresh strength. Towards morning their woe-worn souls forgot their sorrows in gentle slumbers, but soon Louisa waked, and
fearing

fearing she might keep her hospitable entertainer waiting, hastily rose and went down to the apartment she was in the night before. Mrs. Rivers having not yet made her appearance, she had an opportunity of observing the cottage, which the confusion of her thoughts the night before prevented. It was plain, and the only thing that could make it superior to any other, was neatness, a small harpsichord, two shelves of books, containing some of the best theological and poetic works extant. All further examination was stopped by the entrance of Mrs. Rivers, who again welcomed and saluted her fair visitor.

visitor. Louisa now offered to fulfil her last night's promise, and give her kind entertainer some account of herself. " You promised me, last night, your attention, madam, said she, may I now intrude ? "

" I had rather, returned Mrs. Rivers, that a few days should calm that perturbation of spirits, which at present so visibly disturbs you; a recital of what is so lately past, will but renew your sorrows; in the mean time be assured, I believe you innocent of ill, nor would I for the world think the contrary. If you can prefer this solitude to the gaiety of the world (which at your age must have charms),

charms), you are welcome : Nay,
 no thanks (for Louisa attempted
 to speak), I am the obliged. I
 find myself attached to you by a
 power, which I neither strive or
 wish to withstand." Louisa's breast
 was too full for utterance ; tears
 usurped the place of words, which
 the amiable Mrs. Rivers per-
 ceiving, changed the subject by
 telling her fair guest it was the
 hour appropriated for morning de-
 votion. "We have not, continued
 she, a church nearer than seven
 miles ; for my own part, I do not
 think prayer less acceptable to the
 Almighty, though ascending from
 a cottage." After about an hour
 passed

passed in supplication, Mary retired to the call of industry; and Mrs. Rivers to furnish a change of linen for Louisa, who cleared her habit of those sanguinary drops with which it was spotted.

The remainder of the day was spent in conversation; and friendship, swift as the moments flew, increased in their sympathising bosoms: but though Louisa felt its soothing power, she could not restrain the rising tear; her agitation was considerably increased, when the little clock on the table struck six: "Exactly at this time, said she, last night, I began my
weary

weary walk—after such a scene—the wound I gave—Heaven pardon me—’twas designed for my own bosom—but thy all-seeing eye directed my trembling hand, and fixed it in his vicious arm.” Recollection could no longer sustain the painful idea—she ceased and fainted. Mrs. Rivers flew to her assistance, and with the aid of Mary (who was almost as much attached to her as her mistress), she soon recovered, and apologized to her benefactress, who, though grieved at her situation, was not displeased to hear the wound spoke of was the arm, from thence concluding it not dangerous; and though she
much

much wished to hear the whole of this mysterious relation, yet the goodness of her own heart would not permit that of Louisa's to be wounded by the recital of misfortunes, whose impressions were so freshly engraven on it.

C H A P. III.

A melancholy Narrative began.

—How beautiful is death when earn'd by virtue !

——— What pity is it

That we can die but once to serve our country !

ADDISON'S CATO.

WHEN Louisa's tears had a little subsided, and pensive calmness had again taken possession of her bosom, Mrs. Rivers, to divert her thoughts from a recollection of past ills, addressed her in the following manner : “ My dear Louisa, excuse my calling you so, friendship deals not in compliment, I will inform you how I came to take up my residence in this desolate uninhabited spot. You, I trust, have
many

many hours to come ; my misfortunes are beyond the reach of fate ; here have I passed these last fifteen years, and here do I mean to finish my weary pilgrimage."—A half smothered sigh now heaved the bosom of the gentle narrator, on recounting events still painful, though long past ; while the soft radiance of Louisa's eye, gave the tribute of a commiserating tear to sorrows, which (for a while) suspended the recollection of her own. A pause of a few moments ensued, which was interrupted by Mrs. Rivers desiring Mary to set a glass of water before her ; this done, that Lady recounted her story as follows :

“ My

“ My father was the only son of a gentleman of small fortune, who had a place in one of the public offices, which brought him about four hundred pounds a year. By living up to the full of what he possessed, he had it only in his power to procure a pair of colours for his son; who, however, did not remain in that state long; for bravely distinguishing himself, and officers of higher rank having lost their lives in the service of their country, he soon obtained a company. The regiment being much disabled, was ordered home, where, after remaining two years, he closed his only parent's eyes (his mother

ther expiring in giving him birth.) Being left without friends or relatives, he wished sincerely to be recalled to Flanders; which, in a little time, happened. Soon after his arrival in that country, he married the daughter of an officer lately dead, who had two thousand pounds in the British funds. I was born in about a year after this marriage, and the year following, my father was again ordered to England, to the great joy of my mother. In short, not to tire you, we returned home, and passed five years of inexpressible felicity. My father being on full pay, and my mother an excellent œconomist,

her

her small fortune remained in the funds, except the interest, which she received yearly. This happiness was too great to be lasting ; my father was again ordered to Germany, my mother (whom nothing could dissuade) being determined to accompany him. I was, after numberless tears on all sides, placed in a reputable boarding school, a gentleman of the name of Rivers, who had been greatly instrumental to the promotion of my father, having the care of me.

“ At this school I remained for more than three years, hearing from my parents every opportunity.

nity. Though my grief at their first going was very violent, yet the company of my youthful mates soon changed it to a pleasing wish for their quick return.

“ Mr. Rivers (my Guardian) was married to a very amiable lady with a large fortune, who (by her tenderness in supplying all my little wants) I regarded as a mother, and by her conduct it was plainly evinced our affection was reciprocal.

“ In one of my vacations (which were always spent with her) she was gloomy and melancholy, and

if by my caresses I strove to know the cause, she would turn and wipe away a tear; at length, fearing I might hear (not in so tender a manner as herself disclosed it,) she informed me of the death of my father, and her expectancy of my mother's return. My grief was excessive at this mournful news, and not decreased by her arrival some days after, attended with a hearse, in which was the body of my affectionate parent. Her look was so changed, that it was scarcely possible to recollect her; and her grief, which was not of the violent sort, seemed the settled gloom of despair. Sometimes

times she gazed on me till the tears which were pent up in her overcharged heart, burst forth and eased her labouring bosom; then snatching me in her arms, exclaimed,—‘ I will conquer this unavailing grief, and live to protect all that remains of the best of men—it was his last desire—Merciful Heaven give me strength to obey him.’

“ Mrs. Rivers tried every method friendship could devise to comfort her, and not without difficulty persuaded her to suffer the loved clay she had brought so far, to be deposited in the family vault of the Rivers.

“ My mother has since told me, the day preceding that on which my father lost his life, seeing her drowned in tears, he intreated her not to give way to sorrow; that whatever might be the event of the following day, to live for my sake; — ‘ beside, my love, said he, we have known more happiness in these few years than many experience in their longest lives. Then would not your heart with evils that may never happen, but with your usual serenity expel the gloom your tears have spread on my spirits.’ ”

“ Alas !—my mother’s forbodings were too true; when my father,

ther,

ther, after embracing, parted with her in the morning, she remained in a state almost of insensibility, until the entrance of a soldier shook her from her reverie. He informed her (with respect, and as much tenderness as his time would allow) that his captain had received a wound; that fearful of alarming her in that state, he had sent this message in some measure to prepare her for the shock.—‘ They have killed him then!’ said she, with a look that spoke her inward horror.—‘ No, Madam, he is not dead; his lamenting foldiers are now bearing him home.’ Scarcely had he pronounced it

ere they entered with my father in their arms, who had received a musket shot in his breast. My unhappy mother remained rivetted to the spot, her eyes raised to heaven, and lost in agony unutterable. My father holding out his hand, said,—‘ My dear Emily, why will you think so deeply? I have only paid the debt every man owes to God and his country. I am spared to breathe my last sigh in thy arms, to bless thee and our little one before I quit this for a happier state: had I expired without the satisfaction of bidding thee adieu, grief had then been more just.’

‘ Alas !—returned my mother.—

why

why do you attempt to speak comfort to a wretch bereaved of every hope?' 'Again, let me intreat you, said he, not to waste the little time allotted me in unavailing sorrow: would you deprive our dear child of the only support and guardian of her youth? for now, Emily, you are her all.'—The entrance of the surgeon prevented his saying more, who, after desiring my mother's absence, examined the wound, which he pronounced mortal. My father calmly answered, I feel not for myself, I knew it was fatal the moment I received it; but for that amiable woman who has just left us, let me intreat your tenderest

care ; persuade her to return to England as soon as possible. Alas ! she has no one here to speak comfort in her affliction ; to you, sir, I apply, having proof of your humanity by the attention you paid a slight wound I received the first engagement I ever was in. Let me intreat you to wear this ring (taking one of value from his finger) as a memorial of my friendship.' The surgeon received the ring, and promised to fulfil his request. My mother now entered, silent and sad ; the surgeon offered to withdraw. ' Do not go, said my father, I feel a little faint ; Emily, give me your hand, for heaven's sake take comfort.'

comfort.' Nature almost exhausted, he fainted—my mother imagined him dead, cast her despairing eyes first on him, then to heaven, and fell senseless by his side; the surgeon was obliged to call assistance, as both remained deprived of sense and motion. My father first revived, and my unhappy mother, by the use of drops, was soon restored to the painful scene before her.

' Now, my dear Emily, said this affectionate husband, let me conjure you no longer to detain, by your violent emotion, my soul in this painful tenement, but kneel

and join with me, in intreating protection for you, and pardon for my offences from that Power whose mercy I doubt not.' She dropt on her trembling knees. My father seemed to pray for about a quarter of an hour, then feebly pressing my mother's hand, faintly pronounced—'Almighty God, protect her'—bowed his head upon her breast, and expired."

C H A P. IV.

Narrative continued.

—— the Wintry blast of Death
 Kills not the buds of Virtue ; no, they spread
 Beneath the Heavenly beam of brighter suns,
 Thro' endless ages, into higher powers.

THOMSON'S SEASONS.

MRS. Rivers ceased, and dropt a
 filial tear : Louisa's long re-
 strained sympathising sorrow burst
 forth. After a pause of a few mi-
 nutes, the eldest of the Ladies rose :
 " I had this account, my dear
 Louisa, said she, from Mr. Bennet
 (the surgeon who attended my fa-
 ther). But we will talk no more on
 these mournful subjects to-night ;

to-morrow we will renew them; it is now almost supper time. The interval we will spend in musick." She sat down to the harpsichord, and soon convinced her guest, though now hid under a thatched roof, she had harmony of voice and execution of finger that would have graced a drawing room.

When the hymn was finished, Louisa agreeably surpris'd her, by playing in her turn, attended by a voice whose sweetness might have taught melody to the soft breathings of the flute.

Mary now entered with their
supper,

supper, which consisted of vegetables and eggs. Mrs. Rivers apologized to her guest, by informing her the butcher visited them only weekly, at which time they took provisions for the space till his return. “ As to other things, Mary visits Kendal three or four times a year; our bread is baked at home, and our little garden, by the industry of an old man who sometimes attends, supplies us with a great deal. When I first retired here, Mary bought a quantity of fowls; but I grew so attached to my feathered companions, that I would not by any means have them hurt. They well repay our kindness,

ness, we have plenty of eggs, which is of material service to us."

The supper finished, our gentle cottagers retired to rest; and balmy sleep (kinder than the night before) soon overcame their woes in airy visions of ideal happiness.

Soon as the morning gave light, which was not till the hour of seven, Louisa rose, and after intreating the guidance of that Power, whom neither prosperity, or adversity, could make her forget, descended to the parlour, from the window of which she passed her time (till Mrs. Rivers joined her) in
strewing

strewing crumbs to numberless birds, which the bitterness of the weather forces to draw nigh to the habitation of inhuman man, who, regardless of the mercy that should accompany the image of his creator, as they chirping intreat his favour, barbarously shoots, and eases their wants by laying them breathless on the frozen ground.

Others, unmindful of the joys of plenty, a gentle comfort, and playful children, who by their cherub smiles intreat their stay, hastily rise ere the day begins to dawn, and galloping over hedge and ditch, pursue with unwearied ardour

dour—a trembling hare, who flies even at the rustling of the leaves. Unmanly task ! if you must delight in such pleasures, seek not a timid foe, from conquering whom no honour can result. Such were the meditations of Louisa's gentle breast, until joined by her kind entertainer ; breakfast was then introduced, after which the day was spent by our new acquainted friends much as the preceding one. Towards evening Mrs. Rivers thus continued her narrative.

“ For a fortnight after my father's death, my unhappy mother remained insensible, in which
state

state her woes had certainly concluded, had not the unwearied care and attention of Mr. Bennet, who spared no means that art or friendship could devise to save her life, restored her senses to a painful tranquillity.

“ Finding her one day more composed than usual, he informed her of my father’s desire that she should return to England as soon as possible: — ‘ Alas ! said she, I wish to clasp my fatherless child, but never can I leave the remains of the best of men in a country that has murdered him, and rendered me the most wretched of women.’

women.' ' I have thought of this difficulty, said he, and provided for it: the body of Mr. Clairville is inclosed in lead, and may be removed with ease; therefore, let me intreat you to obey his last commands, nor remain longer in a place, which, instead of diminishing, will but increase your grief.' She returned thanks, accompanied by many tears, to this worthy man, whom she desired to write Mr. Rivers an account of her misfortune; and now she needed no hastening to depart, as the remains of her beloved husband were to accompany her.

' She

“ She arrived in England three weeks after Mr. Rivers received the letter. In Mrs. Rivers she found a sympathising friend; for him, (though he professed vast esteem for my father, and had indeed materially served him) he was so lost in pleasures, as gave little time for any thing but the complimentary condolence of fashion.

“ After some little time my mother and myself retired to a small house in Berkshire, where her time was spent in perfecting me in what I had already learned, and teaching me musick. The
amiable

amiable Mrs. Rivers often honoured our little habitation with her company, alleviating my mother's uneasy thoughts of leaving me friendless (as she visibly declined) by promises of friendship, and protection.

“ In fine, something more than three years after losing one parent I became an orphan. My mother, finding her dissolution near, wrote to Mr. Rivers, entreating his protection of me; he returned an answer, with a promise on his honour to execute her request. Now, for the first time since my father's death,

death, (though unable to leave her bed) she seemed cheerful. As I knelt weeping by her side,—‘ Maria, my love, said she, do not weep; if you knew the anguish I have long sustained, you would rather rejoice than grieve, that in laying down pain, I take up never-ending happiness. Mrs. Rivers will supply my place; with her you will not want a mother’s tenderness; obey her, look on her as my representative, and may you never know such sorrow as your unhappy mother.’

Mrs. Rivers stopped, and had
recourse

recourse to the water that stood by her side; then raising her eyes to heaven,—Alas! expiring faint, said she, thy unhappy daughter was doomed to experience thy fate to its utmost limits, — widowed, — childless — friendless, and yet to live to bear a load of woes for years. But Louisa, I distress you; pardon me, it was involuntary; in a moment I will continue and hasten to the end of this painful narrative.

“The evening after Mr. Rivers’s letter arrived, my mother slept for some hours; near ten she waked,

waked, and holding out her hand, said with a smile,—‘ Maria, the hours of pain are past ; methought in this blest sleep my soul had quitted its earthly tenement, and reached the realms of bliss. The first bright spirit I met was thy father : — Now, Emily, said he, grief is changed to joy, we meet to part no more. Though I felt inexpressible delight, I could not refrain saying — Alas, Maria is left behind. Fear not for her, returned he, though various ills surround her, she will go smoothly down the vale of life. He led me on, and I was lost in rapture.’ She
 ceased,

ceased, and by the motion of her lips, seemed to pray for about an hour, when pressing my hand, which was inclosed in hers, articulately said,—Clairville, I come; and without a sigh resigned her soul to the Almighty Giver.”

C H A P. V.

Narrative continued.

——— Nature all
Wears to the Lover's eye, a look of Love,
And all the tumult of a guilty World,
Toss'd by ungenerous passions sinks away.

THOMPSON'S SEASONS.

“ I Shall pass over what followed ;
suffice it, the generous Mrs.
Rivers fetched me two days after,
leaving orders for my mother's fu-
neral, who was removed and laid
by my father.

“ Mr. Rivers welcomed me
with tenderness, and after some
time

time I grew tolerably composed, endeavouring by attention to oblige my only friends, nor was my assiduity unsuccessful; Mr. Rivers seemed fond of me, and his lady was indeed a second mother.

“ I had lived near three years at Mr. Rivers's, when a nephew of that gentleman, the son of his only brother, arrived in England; he was about twenty years old, the last six he had passed in the East-Indies with his father, who possessing a younger brother's fortune, sought to improve it in that country; however, at the expiration of
that

that time, his patrimony was only increased from five to eight thousand pounds, which, when dying, he bequeathed to his son, paying the compliment to his brother Rivers of making him trustee, till Henry acquired the age of twenty-four. This young gentleman, joined to an agreeable figure, a cultivated understanding, and a heart free from vice; he was presumptive heir to Mr. Rivers, who was childless. No wonder that, possessed of such a mind and person, Henry made an impression on my unexperienced heart, an impression, though youthful, that will last till

this agonized breast shall cease to heave a sigh to his beloved memory.

“Our partiality was mutual, on my side, hid in my own breast; on his, shewn in a thousand little attentions, which to an indifferent eye might pass for friendship, but to a man possessed of a knowledge of the world, like Mr. Rivers, was easily discovered.

“Young, unexperienced, what was my surprise to find another person acquainted with what was almost unknown to my own heart.

Mrs.

Mrs. Rivers, ever assiduous to smooth the thorny paths of life, was by the call of soft humanity (a call she never resisted) obliged to attend an expiring friend, a few miles from London, purposing to pass the night there, and return the following day. I was prevented accompanying her, by a slight cold, and the order of the physician, who desired me not to venture out.

“I had dined with Mr. Rivers and Henry, after which the eldest of those gentlemen said to his nephew,—‘ Henry, will you give me

D 3 your

your company this evening? Henry obeyed, and I retired to Mrs. Rivers's dressing room, where taking up a book, I continued reading until a gentle tap at the door disturbed me, which when opened was Mr. Rivers!—'Maria, said he, you seem surprised, I want some tea, will you do me the favor to make it?' I bowed, but my eyes were fixed on the door, expecting Henry's appearance; my absence of mind was not lost on Mr. Rivers, who divined the cause. 'I have left Henry, said he, at Mrs. Selby's assembly; he seemed entertained, and not willing to disturb his

his

his mirth, I slipped out, as I have some unavoidable business this evening.' I felt an unusual glow on my cheeks at his so easily guessing my thoughts.—'Do not blush Maria, continued he, at finding me acquainted with the state of your heart. I have for some time perceived it, for believe me the eye of true friendship reads the thoughts of those it esteems. But let me intreat you, my dear girl, (taking my hand) not to suffer an idle, childish passion to take root in a breast I so much value. Henry does not deserve you, he is unacquainted with your

worth ; he is too young, and (I am sorry to add) too gay to think of marriage. Do not believe, my charming Maria, I have any mercenary views in this advice ; no, on my honour, your happiness is my only concern ; and so far from thinking your alliance would disgrace my family, I should think you the brightest gem that ever adorned it. Indeed, Sir, said I, not daring to lift my eyes, never can my heart, where gratitude is predominant, so ill repay the many favours conferred (had even Mr. Rivers a partiality for me, which I am not vain enough to imagine)

to

to consent to what must lessen him in the opinion of his family, and deprive me of the friendship of one I value above my existence. I esteem, I respect Henry's virtues; he, taught by the example of Mrs. Rivers and yourself, may shew too much respect to an unfortunate girl, who, spoiled by kindness, sometimes forgets her duty.' 'Nay, now you are too grave, said he, and highly over-rate any little favours you may receive, and which your merit might intitle you to tenfold; but tell me, my sweet girl, who is the friend you value *above your existence*?' 'Mrs. Rivers,

Sir, and happy shall I think myself if she will accept my endeavours through life to oblige her; I wish no other situation; a happier I cannot have.' 'So, Maria, then I am quite excluded, said he.' 'Pardon me, Sir, I esteem, I reverence you, nor fear any thing more than your displeasure, which I hope I shall never experience nor ever deserve.' 'What frosty words have you chose! Maria, said he,—esteem, reverence, and fear; you might have spoke far more pleasingly, by substituting a short word, which I will use in return for your chilling ones:—I love you,
your

your fortune shall be my care, so pray no more of those humiliating phrases, to one who regards himself as the obliged party.' A servant now entered with a letter, which demanded his immediate attendance ; he rose, and kindly wishing me good night, retired.

" As soon as he was gone I gave free vent to my tears ; alas ! cried I, tis too true, Mr. Rivers's suspicions are not false, I fear I love Henry too much for my own peace ; but did I esteem him more, and his love were equal to mine, never

will I disgrace him by a match so inferior. Though my heart may suffer, it shall never swerve from the duty I owe the generous Mrs. Rivers; no, my much-loved second mother, I love no one so well as you.

“ I was prevented saying more by the unexpected appearance of Mrs. Rivers, who pressing me to her breast, exclaimed, ‘ wipe off those tears, my child, and suppress this rising anguish; thy bosom is the seat of innocence, and let her bright traits be seen in every feature.’ ‘ Ah, madam, returned I,

Mr.

Mr. Rivers has discovered that I am not worthy your esteem, yet has treated me with a tenderness that wounds worse than the hardest usage; indeed I knew not my own heart till he discovered it to me.' 'I will have no explanations to night, my love, said she, interrupting me; to-morrow we will talk, now you shall retire.' Without waiting my answer, she rung for Mary, who now lives with me, and had attended me ever since my mother's death. Seeing me still in tears at parting, she affectionately kissed me.—' Good night, said she, you have called me your mother,

and

and believe me, such you shall find me.' Tears were my only reply, and I retired with a heart overcharged with duty, love, and gratitude.

"I passed a painful night, wishing for morn; when I saw it approach, I would gladly again have exchanged it, so much did I dread the searching eye of Mr. Rivers; for his lady, I rather wished, than feared her presence; predetermined to acquaint her with the state of my heart, and depend on her friendship, and counsel for the cure of its every foible. I rose
with

with the sun, passing my time between that and the breakfast hour in vain attempts to calm my troubled spirits, twenty times washing away the tears that inflamed my eyes, and as often disfiguring them again : at length the bell rang, and with trembling steps I reached the parlour, but found my terrors groundless, as the object of them was not yet risen. Mrs. Rivers and Henry being alone, the latter viewed me with an inquiring tenderness, the former kindly asked of my health. Ah ! Madam, (said Henry) look, and you need not ask, she is much worse ; but
my

my dear sister (a name he often called me) why do you leave your apartment ?' I know not how, but I involuntarily exclaimed, ' would to heaven I were your sister, then should I have some little claim to the friendship of your excellent friends ; but I am an orphan, bankrupt even in thanks.' ' Then, Maria, I am your brother by a double tie ; am not I an orphan as well as yourself ? — my mother taken from me before I knew my loss ; my father spared, till years had acquainted me with his worth, then snatched from me, to shew the instability of mortal happiness.'

pinefs.' ' Really, said Mrs. Rivers (affecting a smile,) you young folks are very entertaining; believe me, you have both too much sensibility for your own peace. Henry (I reflect with pleasure) is heir apparent to Mr. Rivers, consequently is my son, nor can I wish a worthier; for you, my dear child, you have a yet nearer claim, — a promise to a dying friend, and shall I dare violate what the Almighty heard, and recording angels wrote? No, Maria, you are mine, both by promise and inclination: then oblige me, by no more calling yourself

an

an orphan, as you make me feel you experience the loss of a parent.' — The overflowing of my heart stifled my thanks, and I could only press my benefactress's hand to my lips in silence. She now changed the discourse: ' You do not ask me, Maria, why I returned so unexpectedly last night.' ' I am generally so obliged to the occasion, madam, as not to think of the cause.' — ' Ah, you flatterer, the cause was a very happy one, (said she) my friend had escaped from all her calamities before I arrived, so my stay was needless, and

and I returned almost immediately to town.

“Breakfast now finished, Mrs. Rivers said, ‘Maria, our young friend must excuse us.’ I followed her to her dressing room, where seeing my trembling lips prepare to open, ‘Peace, Maria, said she, you are not to be the speaker, only a hearer. I have already told you the reason of my return last night; in passing through Duke-street, some trifling accident happened to the chaise wheel, by jolting against another carriage. The servant intreated me to get out, and being almost

almost opposite to Mrs. Selby's, I alighted and went in. After paying my compliments to her, I walked through the rooms, which were full of company. The gay widow, Mrs. Modely, was playing at cards, but seeing me, called, 'my dear Mrs. Rivers, your company a moment.'—I turned, and was surprised with the sight of Henry, who I imagined was not acquainted there.—'You must know, continued she, that I am almost mad with this handsome nephew of yours—from the East Indies indeed! it is more like he came from Iceland, regarding all us fine women

women with the indifference of a stoic, not so much as paying us one compliment.'—'I think, said Henry, it is the greatest mark of admiration to be silent; unused till within these few months to such bright assemblages of beauty, no wonder I should be struck dumb; but tell me, my dear madam, (turning to me) how came we to be so happy to have your company to night?' I acquainted him with my little misfortune, which I had hardly told before the servant came to inform me it was repaired; Henry's looks seemed to say I should oblige him by accepting an offer

offer he made of accompanying me home, and we wished the company good night, and entered the chaise, where Henry informed me of his attending his uncle to Mrs. Selby's, that he staid there only a short time. ' Well Henry, said I, is it possible you can be so insensible to all the beauties at the assembly to night ?' ' Really, madam, totally so,—to me they appeared so certain of the power of their all-conquering charms, that I was ill-naturedly determined to shew them that one stupid wretch could view them with indifference. If ever I pay my devoirs (the lady's beauty

beauty out of the question) she must have innocence of manners, purity of heart, and humanity to assist her indigent fellow creatures with what those fair gamblers lose at cards. When I meet such a one, who will deign to share my small fortune, I shall joyfully lay it (with your consent) at her feet.'

"If my consent is necessary for a deserving object, you may always command it, said I, but Mr. Rivers, I fear, views merit as inferior to fortune.'—'Ah, madam! can a pupil of Mrs. Rivers be unworthy?

worthy ?—Now you are mistress of my secret ; with Miss Clairville only can I ever experience happiness ;—possessed of her, eight thousand pounds will be a fortune for a monarch.’ ‘ You talk like a young man in love, Henry, said I, but both parties are yet too young to marry ; but were it otherwise, your uncle’s consent is absolutely necessary, and that you will find difficult to obtain.’

‘ The chaise stopped, and my first question was for yourself. John answered in the dressing-room, but did not mention his master ; I ran
hastily

hastily up stairs, telling Henry we should be glad of his company in half an hour; my maid not expecting my return, was out, so I went to the dressing closet to leave my cloak and gloves; the partition between that and the room you were in, is extremely thin; stopping a moment to distinguish if some stranger was with you, what was my amazement to hear Mr. Rivers speak of Henry in terms I am sure he does not deserve! In short, the oddness of what I first heard, tempted me to hear to the end, and happy was I when the shutting of the door informed me

of his departure.—Now you see, my dear girl, I did not want to be informed, as I knew each circumstance, though acquainted with it in a manner I must ever blush to think of.”

“ The certainty of being beloved by Henry, and the goodness of Mrs. Rivers, operated so strongly on my weakened spirits, that had I not been relieved by tears, I should have fainted: this amiable friend strove not to suppress them, till some little time had abated their first violence, then kindly embracing me, ‘ Maria, said she, your
your

your mother had not your happiness more at heart than myself: I would wish to see you married, though know not how to part from you; with Henry the separation would be trivial. Though I spoke to him of your age, let it be no objection, as there cannot be so strong a safeguard to youth and beauty, as a beloved and virtuous husband.' Stranger to disguise, I made but this objection: "Mr. Rivers will look with horror on one that he will deem has seduced his nephew." 'That must be my care,' said she,—heaven forbid I should make use of the power al-

lotted me in any other cause than that of virtue, especially against my husband. You were too young, Maria, to be acquainted with my affairs, but must now know, my marriage with Mr. Rivers was at the intercession of an uncle, who was my guardian, and a bachelor : on my bridal day he paid down my paternal fortune of twenty thousand pounds, with an addition of ten more, which he presented me.—Alas ! I fear Mr. Rivers's principal view was money. I know not how, but by some means my relation became acquainted with some youthful foibles

bles of Mr. Rivers's, and the old gentleman dying soon after, left me near as much as I first received, together with a landed estate, and manor-house in Kent, to the value of two thousand pounds a year, tying the estate so strongly to me, that no one else can receive the rents, and totally at death to bequeath to whom I please. The gross sum I presented to Mr. Rivers, the yearly income I have used to assist the friendless, Mr. Rivers having no occasion for it, his fortune trebling that. Now, my dear girl, I have pointed the means by which I can assist you,

nor will Mr. Rivers openly avow displeasure at what I shall authorize. You will say I have entered hastily into this matter ;—spare me, Maria, spare me the reason ; I have promised to protect your innocence, nor can I securely do it any other way.' So saying she hastily rose (the tear glittering in her eye), and retired.

C H A P. VI.

Narrative continued.

But happy they! the happiest of their kind,
 Whom gentler stars unite, and in one fate
 Their hearts, their fortunes, and their beings blend.

THOMPSON'S SEASONS.

“AFTER her departure, I sat
 pondering on her last mysterious words, for such they seemed to me. ‘My innocence in danger!’ cried I; impossible—I scarcely am acquainted with any man but Mr. Rivers and Henry; the latter she mentioned as virtuous, and shall I dare suspect the former? Her words were dark, yet without some hidden reason, would she ever consent

to a clandestine proceeding, and risk displeasing a husband, whose every desire seems law.' I then tried to recollect each word he uttered the evening before, which my confusion at that time prevented : the recollection rather confirmed than removed my doubts. —Alas ! he demanded more than reverence and esteem, I think he mentioned love :—merciful heaven ! am I here to strew discontent, when I should think my life too poor a sacrifice for Mrs. Rivers's peace ? My disagreeable reverie was, here interrupted by Mary, who informed me, Mrs. Rivers desired my company in the drawing-

drawing-room, adding—‘and indeed, Miss, there is the most pleasing looking man with her I ever saw : when I went in, Mrs. Rivers told him of my living with your mama, and that I was much attached to you : he answered, he was sure then I was a good girl, and took my hand ; I was so ashamed, that I scarce received my message, but hastened to you.’

“ I composed my features as well as possible, that they might not be an index of the contending passions that dwelt within, and obeyed my summons to the drawing-room, where I was reposed,

essed, like Mary, in favour of the
[stranger, who was a likely man,
seemingly about the age of thirty-
eight. He rose at my entrance.—

‘ Ah ! madam, said he, it is in-
deed the daughter of my friend,
the living image of her angel mo-
ther ;’ and he embraced me with
a fatherly affection. Mrs. Rivers
then informed me his name was
Bennet (the surgeon I have before
mentioned. My usual timidity
vanished when I heard his name :
‘ Where, said I, have you been
lost so long ? many times did my
mother wish to see you once more,
to repeat her thanks.’ The tear of
recollection stood in my eye ; his
rolled

rolled down his manly cheek. ‘I remained in Germany, said he, till four months ago, as I found my business very beneficial there. On my return to England I sought Mrs. Clairville with the greatest assiduity, but could learn no tidings till I had the honour of seeing Mrs. Rivers, when I learned the melancholy event I dreaded.

“ In short, not to tire you, this good man visited us constantly, and at length made a proffer of his hand to Mary, who did not want much persuading from Mrs. Rivers to accept it: and on the wedding-day presented Mary with five

hundred pounds; myself not interfering, so sorry was I to part from her. During this interval, I cautiously avoided being a moment alone with Mr. Rivers. For Henry, he made a tender of his heart, which I was not coquet enough to deny, nor prude enough now to conceal, gave me pleasure; beside, he had a powerful advocate in Mrs. Rivers, though indeed he wanted none but my own heart.

“ The summer was now advancing; we removed to a seat of Mr. Rivers's, in Nottinghamshire: that gentleman (great as the distance was) often visited the capital.

During

During one of these excursions, I was walking one evening alone in a bye road that led to the village; perceiving a letter on the ground, I stooped to pick it up; it seemed to have been lately opened, and by the neatness of the folding, not rumpled by keeping, but rather slipped aside in putting in the pocket: curiosity (as it was open) prompted me to look at the contents, but judge my surprise when I read, as near as I can recollect, these words:—

‘GEORGE,

‘Be ready with the chaise exactly at twelve to-morrow night: Young Rivers is obliged to attend his uncle

at

at Nottingham, on particular business, so we have nothing to fear from that quarter. All must be managed, if possible, without alarming Mrs. Rivers,—not much danger of that, Miss Clairville's room being so distant from hers; be punctual, as you expect your reward, which will be proportioned to the service you render us.'

'I know not how I had power to read this horrid letter, but my eye no sooner reached the end, than hastily turning homeward, I fled with a precipitation that might have eluded my betrayers had they been pursuing me; for so powerfully

fully had fear possessed itself of my senses, that I did not stop till I reached the parlour, where Mrs. Rivers and Henry were waiting my appearance at tea.—Oh Madam! protect me, said I, my ruin is determined.—My agitation prevented more, and I fell senseless on the ground. Henry raised me, and called for help, and with the assistance of my amiable benefactress, soon brought me to myself, and seated me on a sofa between them, each taking a hand: Henry opened that which still held the letter;—
 ‘ Here madam, said he, this is perhaps the cause of her agonies.’ Mrs. Rivers soon read the contents with
 great

great emotion, and then returned it to Henry, who at the conclusion exclaimed,—‘ My Maria was not formed for a ruffian’s prey ; the protector of innocence has shewn the danger, that she may escape it :— Ah Madam ! we have your consent, then, Maria, give me a legal right, —a husband’s right, which who shall dare violate ?’ Overcome with shame, I hid my face in Mrs. Rivers’s bosom.— ‘ Lift up your head, my dear girl, said she, and observe me ; I see no security in any other plan but that Henry has so hastily formed, for should you escape this snare, no doubt fresh ones will be laid, of which we may not be fortunate

tunate enough to be apprised. I
 know you love each other; the
 difference of forms, or a few
 months is immaterial, and should
 you stay that time, I fear the con-
 sent of Mr. Rivers will be equally
 hard to obtain. My advice is, that
 Henry and you should ride, at-
 tended only by the groom, whom
 you may contrive to send back on
 some message, then take the bye
 road to Mansfield, where you may
 procure a chaise and four; tell
 them to return the saddle horses
 the day following, make the best
 of your way to Scotland (as Ma-
 ria wants yet four years of being
 of age) be married at the first place
 you

you legally can. Myself will use every endeavour to reconcile you to Mr. Rivers, if which fails, the Almighty, who knows the uprightness of my purpose, has put it in my power to provide for you.'

" My confusion prevented an answer ; for Henry, he was on his knees, returning Mrs. Rivers thanks in the highest raptures. Seeing my tears,—' Ah, madam, said he, your generous proposal meets Maria's disapprobation ; rather let me protect her some other way, than she become the victim of too much gratitude.' ' Why will you, returned I, distress me by an
idle

idle surmise, or rack my heart still more?—alas! in giving my hand I give all, so long have you possessed my heart.

‘ I wish, said Mrs. Rivers, Henry, you would retire for about an hour; I would pass that time with Maria alone, who must compose herself that nothing be suspected.’ He obeyed, pressing our hands first alternately to his lips.

“ Now this amiable woman repeated every thing that friendship or tenderness could devise to comfort me: when she had in some degree succeeded, and my lips
were

were uttering the language of gratitude, she stopped me.—‘ You have no obligation to me but what a promise can return, make me that, and I am your debtor.’—Ah, madam, what can you ask that I will not promise, that I will not fulfil at the hazard of my life ?’ ‘ Then, my dear girl, though I could wish you to have no concealments from Henry, but let an ingenuous candor shine in every action, for without mutual confidence happiness is impossible ; yet, in pity to him and compassion for my peace, let your suspicions of Mr. Rivers (for I know you must suspect him) be hid in silence.

We

We have no proofs, nothing but suspicions, which, if discovered, would make an everlasting breach between the uncle and nephew : beside, if his intentions were as bad as our fears, he thinks you ignorant of them ; then, my dear girl, let them remain in our own breasts. If you survive Mr. Rivers and myself, you are at liberty, and may plead for excuse a promise to me, to whom your honour is dear as my own.

“ She ceased, and I promised what she desired. After some time Henry joined us, and the evening passed with as much tranquillity

quillity as could be expected ; fear, however, that my betrayers might even come before their time (for the date of the note appointed the following night) agitated me so much, that I discovered it to Mrs. Rivers : — ‘ Fear not, my Maria, said Henry, I purpose not to sleep, for my fears equal yours.’ My benefactress, however, thought it best for me to pretend an inclination to read, and so dismiss my servant, and afterwards to return, and pass the night in her chamber. It was so settled and executed ; myself rising early, returned to my own room, where the servant,

vant, when she came to call me, found me already dressed.

“ I now wished for my dear Mary, who would have made my flight far more pleasing; but she was settled in London with her husband. I had taken a change of linen in my pocket; my riding dress making every thing else unnecessary.

“ We met as usual at breakfast; when the servants were withdrawn Mrs. Rivers addressed herself to Henry:—‘I need not commend, my dear nephew, Maria to your care, of your prudence having no doubt.’

doubt.' ' When I forfeit your good opinion, said he, may I become the outcast of all mankind.' ' I know you will not, said she: one thing more, when you return from Scotland, write to me, but in a manner I may shew to Mr. Rivers, as I would not have him think I act in open opposition to his commands.'

" After some little time she rung to order the horses; ' I must hasten you, I see,' affecting to be cheerful :—' Fear not, Maria, we have, I doubt not, many happy hours to pass together. When I receive your letter I will immediately

ately answer it, by desiring you to go to my house in Kent, where I will soon see you.' For me, my feelings at this parting were neither relieved by words or tears, and I embraced her with agony unutterable. She now retired to her chamber, to conceal sentiments similar to my own.

" Henry, though pained at our parting, could scarcely conceal his satisfaction, which I reproved. ' Can it be otherwise? said he; am I not going to be united to you, by the tenderest ties, which only death can break? Can you blame my raptures? for which I almost thank

the letter that brought about this blest event.'

"The servant entered to say the horses were ready.—Henry assisted me to mount. Raising my eyes to take my farewell of the mansion, I perceived its amiable mistress at one of the windows, who forcing a smile, and kissing her hand, looked an adieu.

"We now rode off; at the end of three miles Henry stopped his horse, and called the groom, telling him to return and say to Mrs. Rivers, we should ride to Sir Thomas Thornton's, as I had never
seen

seen his gardens, and probably should not return to dinner. The man obeyed, and we reached Mansfield by twelve o'clock. A chaise was immediately prepared, and we travelled the remainder of the day, all night, and the day following; in short, we arrived safe at the place of our destination, which was a small village at the entrance of Scotland. We were no sooner united, and proper certificates taken, than we returned to Penrith, at which place my Henry determined to wait an answer to a letter he immediately wrote to Mrs. Rivers. We remained at Penrith several days, which time

we spent in seeing the country. In one of these excursions we rode over part of this moor; we were both pleased with it, and returned for three days, visiting different parts of it, a servant from the inn attending to carry cold provisions. My Henry was particularly charmed with this spot, on which we sat two days to dine. In this place, where my cottage now stands, my much loved husband caught me in his arms :—‘ Here, my love, should the world forsake us, said he, part of our little fortune might build a cot, the rest support a life of rapture, which the
greatest

greatest might envy: possessed of thee, Maria, I ask no more.'

" Pardon me, Louisa, I must leave off, for the present; recollection is painful, and though religion has, in some degree, made me composed under my misfortunes, yet cannot I forget past happiness:—no, my beloved husband, thy idea is never absent."

Louisa's tears flowed fast as Mrs. Rivers's.—' Alas! said she, that I should be the occasion of your reciting woes which make every wound time's lenient hand had almost closed, bleed afresh.' " Believe me, no, my love, said Mrs.

we spent in seeing the country. In one of these excursions we rode over part of this moor; we were both pleased with it, and returned for three days, visiting different parts of it, a servant from the inn attending to carry cold provisions. My Henry was particularly charmed with this spot, on which we sat two days to dine. In this place, where my cottage now stands, my much loved husband caught me in his arms :—‘ Here, my love, should the world forsake us, said he, part of our little fortune might build a cot, the rest support a life of rapture, which the
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Rivers ; did not tears daily relieve my full heart, I must long since have bid adieu to a world, which to me has been a draught of bitterness ; but come, Louisa, I will not infect you with my melancholy, reach a book, and read for half an hour." She obeyed, and read Pope's Messiah in a manner that divested her auditor of every other sentiment but the divine subject.

Mary made her appearance, bearing their evening repast, which placing on the table, would have withdrawn. " Stay, said her mistress, take your usual seat, I will

no longer suffer ceremony to deprive me of my companion; Louisa will be equally pleased with your company as myself." Louisa, whose soul was affability itself, immediately rose. "If you knew the pain you make me feel by this misplaced complaisance, I am sure you would not do it; it is I that am so lately an intruder, that should give place." Mary could not resist her solicitations, as she by this time had placed her a chair. They now sat down to their vegetable supper, with a thankfulness and peace that I fear are not always the companions of more sumptuous entertainments, and then

retired to rest with minds so free from guile, that had they waked in eternity, neither envy, malice, or any other discordant passion would have prevented their everlasting welfare.

C H A P. VII.

Narrative concluded.

The News arrives:

Untold, she saw it in her Servant's eye.

She felt it seen (her Heart was apt to feel).

YOUNG'S NIGHT THOUGHTS.

LOUISA was much surprised in the morning at the sight of a strange female, asking Mary if she belonged to the cottage ; she was informed it was a person who lived about half a mile from them, nearer the high road, for whom (being a widow in very indigent circumstances) Mrs. Rivers had built a little cot, in which, with her father and three children, she

now lived : “ and, continued she, by my mistress’s assistance, and feeding a few sheep on the moor, makes a decent livelihood. She comes to us three or four days every week, at which times she makes us bread, for which we have an oven, and likewise performs all the household work, to which I am unequal. Her father tends our little garden ; they are the only neighbours within some miles.”

Mrs. Rivers now entered, and kindly asked the mother of her children’s health, adding, as it is a fine frosty morning, what think you

you of a walk, Louisa? to the which Louisa assenting, was after the morning occupations executed.

Mrs. Rivers and her young friend, accompanied by Mary, directed her steps between the hills, whose high tops sheltered them from the wind. "I think, said Mrs. Rivers, I cannot have a better opportunity than the present to finish my melancholy story, as my spirits too are tolerably easy." Louisa bowed, and Mrs. Rivers began.

"Henry received an answer from his amiable aunt in eight days,

days, desiring us to go to her house in Kent, at which place she would meet us. In the postscript, she added, Mr. Rivers had received the news of our marriage better than she expected.

“ We set out the next day, the third night from which we reached her seat; it was only twelve miles from London; and the morning after I clasped my benefactress in my arms, who, after mutual congratulations, informed me, that on my not returning the day of the pretended visit, my maid had been extremely inquisitive, had gone out, and remained a considerable time; and though I sat up the whole

whole night, continued she, there was not the least noise, from whence I concluded she was in the secret, and went to give information of your absence, and accordingly gave her warning. Now, my dear Henry, I would have you immediately return to London, and pay your duty to Mr. Rivers; I shall remain with Maria some days, as I have already told him.

Henry soon after departed for town, after which I informed Mrs. Rivers, that Henry, on our journey to Scotland, had inquired of me, if any one had ever addressed me, from whom I could suppose that letter came: I replied

plied in the negative, that I had seen no one but in the presence of the family. She thanked me for my tenderness (as she expressed it) of her peace : ‘ Mr. Rivers returned, said she, the third day after your elopement ; he betrayed no signs of passion or anger, but was gloomy and thoughtful, which I hope will pass off, and all be well.

“ Henry returned the same evening ; his account of his uncle agreed with Mrs. Rivers’s ; he said, on his entering the parlour, Mr. Rivers started : ‘ So, Sir, you imagine you have duped me,—begone, and beware my revenge.’ After some recollection, he accepted Henry’s excuses,

excuses, seemed more reconciled, but appeared lost in thought.

“ In short, to hasten to the fatal hour that deprived me of every earthly happiness, I shall pass over ten months of bliss I passed with my dear husband, which was often increased by the addition of Mrs. Rivers’s company. Alas ! how many years of sorrow have followed, what appeared to me a moment, so swiftly did it pass ! I lived entirely in Kent ; Mr. Rivers never desiring to see me, I carefully avoided his presence, nor once visited London in that time.

“ One day, my dear Henry had been at his uncle’s, he returned
very

very melancholy ; after much intreaty, he told me the cause : Mr. Rivers had received letters from India, that the person with whom my Henry's fortune was intrusted, was dead ; that his executors were contending about the estate ; that without his appearance to make good his claim (which Mr. Rivers would impower him to do,) he must infallibly lose it.

‘ Ah ! cannot I go ? ’ said I.
 ‘ Impossible, my love, consider your situation : for indeed I was far advanced with child. ‘ Had it not been for my uncle's imprudence, continued he, in not recalling my trifling fortune, this had not happened.

pened. A scene followed, which a mind possessed of sensibility, like yours, Louisa, can better imagine than I describe; so painful still is the remembrance, that I must pass over the remainder of my story as slightly as it will permit. Mrs. Rivers arrived from town; she had heard the news, and joined her tears with mine. Said she, 'I cannot see so violent a necessity for Henry's going; eight thousand pounds cannot hurt Mr. Rivers's estate; but alas! he is determined, and we must obey. Raise your dejected spirits, my love; I will never leave you;

you; Henry can trust to my care, and should the angel of death remove me, still is Maria not destitute?

“ In short, after several interviews with Mr. Rivers, it was fixed for my loved husband to go with the first ship that sailed, which was in three weeks. The fatal hour arrived,—alas ! my agonies at parting were but forebodings of what I afterwards endured. Mrs. Rivers could not sooth me; a kind of dreadful surmise continually haunted me, that we should meet no more. We parted without

out a word, speechless woe denying every resource but a last—last embrace.

“And now, my dear Louisa, Mary must inform you the rest; I have neither spirits to relate, or fortitude to hear it.” So saying, she walked slowly on, and Mary continued.

“Mr. Henry Rivers had not been gone long before his uncle paid my mistress a visit, and seemed much reconciled; but alas! scarcely had two months passed since my young master’s departure,

ture, before his servant (the only one that attended him) returned mourning to England, with the dreadful news that his master in three weeks after they sailed, had caught a fever, and after being delirious a few days, expired in his arms; that accidentally meeting an English ship, he put himself and his master's property abroad. Mrs. Rivers was unfortunately in town at the receipt of this fatal intelligence, which being told her without caution, she was so much affected, that after repeated faintings for two days, she was seized with convulsions. My mistress, from whom

whom she was never long absent, became very uneasy, and determined to go to town; but those friends were destined to meet no more. for on her unexpected arrival at Mr. Rivers's house, her Henry's servant opened the door. Amaze-ment for some time deprived her of speech; but too soon was she acquainted with her misfortune by their equivocal and unprepared answers.

This sudden shock operated so violently on my dear mistress, that her senses quite forsook her, and by Mr. Rivers's order she was re-
moved

moved to apartments in the neighbourhood, where the next morning in this unhappy state, she was delivered of a dead daughter, and the following evening closed the eyes of her amiable benefactress, to open no more but on her kindred angels.

“ I used generally to go to the house in Kent once a month, to see my mistress ; and as Mr. Bennet (my husband) lived in the city, I seldom saw Mrs. Rivers, except there, so was unacquainted with this tale of sorrow till Mr. Bennet accidentally saw Mrs. Rivers's death

death in the papers. With heavy hearts we went directly to the town house; there I learned the dreadful state of my mistress, and flew to see her. She had then been six days deprived of reason, and it was much feared if even her life was spared, that her intellects were quite ruined.

“ I never left her for six weeks, at the end of which she seemed to gather strength, but had no appearance of recollection or returning sense.

“ Mr. Rivers sent one day for
my

my husband ; ‘ Mr. Bennet, said he, I am extremely concerned at the state of Maria, and think it would be best to have her entirely with you. Her fortune of two thousand pounds is in the funds, I will add two thousand more, which may support you all a distance in the country.

‘ I have no doubt of your care of her ; if you approve my proposal, I will make the money over to you for her use.’ My husband, after consulting me, accepted the offer. We sold our furniture, let our Shop, which, with what little we had

had beside, amounted to about a thousand pounds more, and retired about forty miles from town. We seldom heard of Mr. Rivers, he having insisted on giving up her fortune, with the other sum, entirely to my husband's management.

“ In about six months after we had been settled in the country, Mr. Bennet began to flatter me with hopes of her returning reason, as she spoke more, and frequently wept for hours. I had the delight to find him not mistaken; for, by the time our first year in the country was expired, she was sensible as at this

G hour,

hour, and recollected her husband's death; but, till we acquainted her, knew nothing of Mrs. Rivers's. My husband, enraptured, wrote Mr. Rivers an account of her recovery, but received a cold complimentary letter in return, in which he said, Though he should always be glad to hear of Maria's welfare, yet the great uneasiness she had occasioned compelled him to wish to see her no more.

“ So well was my mistress recovered, that we scrupled not to shew her the letter. ‘ Alas!’ said she, ‘ I pardon his unkindness; had

Henry

Henry never known me, he would still have had an heir: had he not been angry, never would he have consented to his voyage—Fatal hour! —Mrs. Rivers lost—My infant, all all, gone! Only me left to bewail, fearful even to mention my wishes, lest my reason be still suspected.’—

‘Surely, my loved mistress,’ said I, bursting into tears, ‘we are not so cruel.’ ‘Do not cry, Mary, returned she: I am not ungrateful, but I cannot respect Mr. Rivers; could I have my will, never should he see or hear from me more: I have no friends but yourselves, why not retire farther from him?’ ‘Name

but your wishes, and calm your griefs, and we will go where you please,' said Mr. Bennet.—'You are ever kind, my amiable friend,' replied she, 'and I will tell you:' she then mentioned this place, and the building a small house here; 'there,' said she, 'free from the noise and bustle of the world, I may assuage my sorrow, and prepare myself for a happier state.' In short, she pressed her suit with such earnestness, that my husband soon consented; and we came and settled at Kendal, where we employed a workman (after buying the land) to build the cottage, which, in less than a year,

was

was made tenable. I should not omit telling you, I left word if any letters came where we lived before, to send them to a person in London, who managed our money matters, but knew none of our connections, and they would remit them ; but never has one line reached us from Mr. Rivers this more than fifteen years which we have been here. My dear Mr. Bennet lived but four years after we came to the cottage. My mistress has been as composed as you could expect, though it is plain religion only teaches her to bear her griefs with moderation.

G 3 CHAP.

C H A P. VIII.

LOUISA'S Story began.

————— Fear not,
Sweet Innocence, thou stranger to offence,
And inward storm! He, who yon skies involves
In frowns of darkness, ever smiles on thee
With kind regard.

THOMSON'S SEASONS.

MARY concluded her narrative: her mistress's pensive step had already reached the cot, her companions lingering behind, to prevent her hearing what might give so valuable a heart an additional pang. "Well Louisa, (said she as they approached her), do you not think I had enough to drive me from the world

to this peaceful spot?" "Really, Madam, (returned she) were I to judge of mankind, by some I have lately met, your absence is much to be envied; for though but seventeen, and only six weeks quitted a convent, I have had so disgusting a taste of society, that never do I wish to mix in the great world again.—But, with your permission, I will now acquaint you with as much as I know myself of my unfortunate story.—Unfortunate well may I say, for never have I experienced a paternal blessing—never the soft soothings of a fond mother—an innocent out-cast even from my cradle!—

"The first I can remember was (I suppose about the age of five) parting from an honest country woman who had been my nurse: the tears I shed, at parting from her, she repaid with interest; but, in spite of both, a woman, who was to have the care of me, tore me from her embraces, and put me in a chaise, in which we travelled some miles, till we reached an inn, where we stopped to dinner.—For two days we continued our journey, at the end of which time we embarked on board a vessel that took us to Calais; after stopping one day, we continued our route as far

as Abbeville, where I was to be boarded in a convent.—On the day I was delivered to the care of the abbess, in the parlour was an English girl (about my own age) on the point of taking leave of a most amiable lady, who was her mother, and returning to England. For me, taking me from my nurse, I regarded in so heinous a light, that brought me with so much indifference as to be noticed by the lady, whose daughter was in an agony of sorrow. ‘Julia, my love,’ said she, her own voice faltering, ‘observe this young lady, a lovely little companion for you, she will learn

you fortitude,—she must, I am sure, have parted from affectionate friends, yet bears it with resignation.—

With these words she joined our hands. “Indeed, madam,” said I,

“had I a mamma to leave, I should grieve as much as miss; but I have none, only a poor mammy, and her they have taken from me; so now they may put me where they please.”

—The Countess of Melville (for that was the lady’s name) immediately asked the abbess of my family, who informed her I was an orphan, my name Louisa Villars, and dependent on the bounty of my guardian, who had paid my board eight
 207 20 years

years in advance. 'I fear she feels her dependence early,' continued she, 'but she shall not want a friend.'—The Countess applauded her, and entreated I might be Julia's companion. These ladies, I afterwards found, were old friends, being brought up together in a convent, and their ancient kindness had still subsisted, though the one had taken the veil, and the other returned to her own country, where, being married, she was mother of a son, and the sweet Julia! The father of this pair, by a mistaken notion of their being spoiled at home, insisted on their being put to school! The son

was accordingly sent to Eton;—the Countess rather chose (though more distant) to trust her darling with her old friend, than at a public boarding-school, especially as Madame du Saint, the abbess, (though herself a rigid catholic) viewed every one who truly served God (however different their forms) in as near a way to salvation as herself.

“The young Julia, at her mother’s request that I might be her companion, threw her arms about my neck, ‘No,’ said she, ‘she shall be my sister, then my mamma (as she
has

has none) will be hers; won't you, madam?' The amiable Countess put an arm round each: 'Yes, dear girls, I will be mother to both; they have hard hearts indeed, Louisa, whom that countenance will not soften.' During this speech, I had caught hold of her hand, and, bursting into tears, thanked her as well as my little heart, throbbing with gratitude, would permit.

"After repeatedly taking leave, and as often returning, the Countess and Julia parted; for a while we were very sorrowful, but at length, time (that common reliever) soothed

soothed our grief, and we became excellent companions. We learned, played, and slept together. At my first arrival in the convent, I had not even been taught to read, but, on some pains taken with me, I learned with such eagerness as delighted Madame du Saint, who treated us more with the tenderness of a mother than the superiority of a mistress.

Eight years glided away imperceptibly ; the Countess had as many times visited her daughter : not unmindful of her promise, she honoured me with a degree of fondness,

ness, the more flattering, as, in her presents to Julia, never was I forgotten. At the end of this period, Julia returned to England for a short time to visit her father, whom she had not seen for the time before mentioned. So grieved were we at parting, that the Countess entreated I might accompany her, promising to bring us both back in a month. — Gladly, my dear madam, would I grant your request, said Madame du Saint, but daily I expect to hear from her friends; should any of them come in her absence, how could I excuse it? — The Countess acquiesced, and, with a promise of

my

my friend's quick return, we parted.

“As the abbess surmised, so it happened; for, about a week after, the person, who first brought me, paid us a visit: I was called to the parlour, but had not the least recollection of her again. She accosted me with, ‘Well, Louisa, how do you do? your friends are not unmindful of you, I am come to pay four years more; great friendship all this, I hope you will deserve it. I had no notion of friendship, but from lady Melville, and hastily exclaimed, ‘How does my dear mamma?’

ma?—and when does Julia return?

—‘Mamma, miss!’ said she, hesitating. Madame du Saint remedied my mistake, by explaining my calling a young lady in the convent, sister; and her mother permitting me to use that liberty with her. The woman presently regained her consequence, observing, ‘young ladies should not be too talkative nor ask questions, but stay till their elders thought proper to satisfy them in every thing that was proper for them to know.’ ‘Believe me, madam,’ said I with spirit, ‘had I at first recollected you, the question had been spared: were my Julia
and

and her mother here, I should have no inquiries beyond the convent walls.' Madame du Saint gave me a look of disapprobation, and ordered me to my apartment. 'Stop, miss, (said Mrs. Masters, for so was she called,) beware of ingratitude, your family has suffered severely for it.' 'Indeed, madam, you accuse me unjustly; I am extremely grateful for the happy situation I enjoy; but you must pardon me if I prefer the friends I have seen, to those who never honoured me with their presence.' 'Well, miss,' returned she, 'let it pass: what improvements have you made?' Madame du Saint informed

formed her I spoke French and Italian, perfectly well; and played on the harpsichord, and painted tolerably. Mrs. Masters looked astonished, and objected to the last articles, as increasing the expense beyond what my guardian allowed.

‘Not, in the least,’ said the abbess, ‘we teach her ourselves, and she learns with such facility, it is a pleasure to instruct her. I have found her the gentlest temper I ever met with, and am extremely sorry she has said any thing to give you offence.’ The kindness with which the abbess spoke forced from me what insolence could not effect; and the tears which
pride

pride had stifled found way, and rolled plenteously down my cheeks. ' If I have behaved in a manner to need an apology, from a lady like Madame du Saint, I am conscious I am wrong. Pardon me, Madam (turning to Mrs. Masters) the goodness of that lady, and some others, have spoiled me, but I will endeavour to learn humility.' She was pleased to unbend her brow at my submission, saying she had no doubt I should be well provided for, if I merited it. After settling her business with the abbess (with whom she left money to clothe me) she made me happy by her departure.

‘ I am extremely sorry,’ said Madame du Saint, ‘ that you should say any thing Mrs. Masters may construe into an offence ; she may think you ill taught, and remove you to some other place ; and, indeed, Louisa, I should be sorry to part from you.’ Had she spoke for hours, she could not have done it more effectually ; the idea of being parted from my real friends, painted my imprudence in the strongest light, and I promised, should she return again, to behave with the greatest humility and circumspection.

C H A P. IX.

LOUISA'S Story continued.

He saw her charming, but he saw not half
 The charms her downcast modesty conceal'd;
 That very moment love and chaste desire
 Sprung in his bosom——.

THOMSON'S SEASONS.

“THE Countess brought her daughter about the time appointed; Julia hastily embraced the abbess, and flew to our apartment to seek me. After mutual caresses, I informed her of the behaviour of Mrs. Masters: ‘Indeed,’ replied the lively Julia, ‘I have been as little happy as yourself, for of all the odd mortals, sure my father is the strangest: he
 has

has the gout to a violent degree, which adds to his native peevishness. Lady Melville bears all with the patience of a saint, appearing only to feel his ill humour when levelled at my brother or me. My brother, Louisa, is the loveliest youth I ever saw, four years older than me, now in his seventeenth year; but I cannot describe him; let his picture speak for him'—so saying, she shewed me a miniature of Lord Gray, on which, as we were passing our comments, Madame du Saint entered the room. 'Why, Julia,' said she, 'you have scarcely told me how you do; you

2

were

were in such a hurry to see your friend, that you forgot compliments: how do you like England?' 'Really, Madame, I don't know; I saw little but our own family: papa's gout was so bad, it entirely confined mamma; and he was so cross, that, if I was cheerful, I was a hoyden a convent could not tame, — if serious, I had learnt gloominess from nuns who languished for the world they had renounced in a pet. My brother, Lord Gray, was not more fortunate; if he read, he was a book-worm, — if gay, a spendthrift, — if grave, he was considering what was the best game to lose his estate at,

for

for he perfectly well knew that hazard and billiards were attended to at Oxford (where my brother has lately been) with more avidity than literature.' I know not how long Julia would have run on, had not Madame du Saint interrupted her gravely, with, 'You are speaking of your father, Lady Julia;—but whose picture have you there?' 'My brother's, Madam,' said she (presenting it) 'he is to travel in three years, at which time we may hope to see him; and, as I would not have Louisa a stranger to her relations, I have brought this likeness that she may know him when they meet.'

"Your father said with great justice a convent had not tamed you," replied Madame du Saint smiling, "for you are a little madcap."

"I shall pass over three years, in which nothing material happened at the convent; Lady Julia was in continual expectancy of being sent for home. For me, I knew I had more than a year to stay, from the money advanced by Mrs. Masters; how much longer was uncertain, and would to me have been immaterial had Julia remained; but I looked forward to her departure with the utmost regret."

"At

At length the dreaded time arrived, the Countess of Melville came to Abbeville, her son attending her; he was on his route to Paris, but had gained permission to see his sister in his way. Lady Melville purposed returning to England in three weeks with her daughter: and, that she might not be separated from her son before he set out for Paris, hired an hotel ready furnished. My friend, Julia, took her leave of the convent the day after her arrival; the sorrow of both parties was so violent, and Lady Melville so warmly entreated Madame du Saint, that she

gave permission I should pass the days with Julia at their hotel, when they did not come to the convent.

“Lady Julia and myself made good use of the permission obtained; we were never asunder. The day of my first visit Lady Melville happened to be out with a lady she formerly knew in the convent, and Julia introduced me to her brother. ‘Augustus,’ said she, ‘receive your other sister; though last, do not let her be least in your affection.’ He saluted me respectfully. ‘Your request is easily granted, Julia; would

Miss

Miss Villars deign to favour me with her friendship, on my part it could not be secondary.' Totally unused to the conversation of men, I stammered out, 'You do me honour, my Lord,'—and remained silent. Lady Melville entered almost immediately; and, after common compliments, observed I was grave. 'I'll give you the reason, Madam,' said Julia, 'she is ashamed before my brother; I know by myself, when I was in England, and for years had seen no man but our old jolly priest, who used to say mass to the nuns, I was afraid to look my father in the face; and his cross

looks did not decrease my fear,' continued she, whispering her brother, too low to be heard by the Countess, who had taken my hand. 'Peace! wild girl: I wish Louisa had some of your spirits; she is too much affected at losing such a mad-cap: but, my dear girl, (turning to me), should your friends take you from the protection of Madame du Saint, (as doubtless by your age they soon will) and things in England should not answer your wishes, in Lady Melville shall you find realized, the tender appellation you formerly honoured me with.'—Lord Gray joined us ere I could answer; he

he had been at the window with Julia, and I could only thank the Countess with a look, which, had it spoke my soul, meant respect and everlasting gratitude. ‘ Do you know Madam,’ said he, ‘ you possess a treasure without knowing it?—Miss Villars’s picture.’ ‘ It is without knowing it indeed, Augustus, if I have it.’ ‘ Then, Madam, when you return to West Park, look in the gallery at that inimitable picture of Hope, and if you do not allow the justice of what I advance, I will submit never to give my opinion of likenesses again.’ ‘ Really, on recollection,’ said she, ‘ it is a strong resem-

blance; but now you talk of pictures, Louisa and Julia shall exchange portraits before they part: Louisa's will remind you, Julia, how well gravity fits on a young woman; and yours will, I hope, remind Louisa that she has a sister.'

"Lady Melville took us in the afternoon to the house of a painter, to whom we sat, on his promising to finish the miniatures in a fortnight. As the day was fine, we all preferred walking to the use of the carriage: just as we reached home, two English gentlemen, whom the Countess knew, overtook
us;

us ; and, as they expressed a desire to see Lord Gray before his departure, she entreated their company to tea. ‘ Augustus,’ said lady Melville, ‘ I bring you two welcome visitants, Lord Castlebrook, and Mr. Danvers.’—‘ Castlebrook, I rejoice to see you ; Mr. Danvers, you do me honour.—Gentlemen, give me leave to introduce you to my sisters.’—‘ I have ever heard,’ said Mr. Danvers, ‘ Lady Melville spoke of as possessing the most extensive humanity ; common report for once was true ; for nothing but the general peace of mankind could have induced her to hide two such divinities so long in

a cloister.'—I saw the blush which warmed my cheeks at this compliment reflected on Julia's, and the timidity she laughed at in the morning, she felt in the evening.

“ The gentleman remained at Lady Melville's till the time I returned to the convent. When that lady ordered the coach to be ready to take me home, our visitors seemed extremely surprised. ‘ I beg pardon, Madam,’ said Mr. Danvers, ‘ but does not this young lady return to England with you ?’ ‘ No,’ said she, ‘ her friends wish her to remain some time longer in France.’

“ I

“ I soon after wished them a good night, and returned home, attended by the Countess's woman, and Lord Gray, who insisted on accompanying us to the convent gate.

“ I had scarcely paid my devoirs to Madame du Saint in the morning when the Countess's coach arrived for me ; it was not too soon for my wishes ; I hastily entered it, and in a quarter of an hour embraced Julia. Lady Melville was rather indisposed, and had desired not to be disturbed ; Lord Gray and his sister were at breakfast alone. ‘ I know not how,’

H 6

said

said Julia 'I am to live in that foggy climate where I am going without you, Louisa, for in this pure air I scarcely exist in your absence.'

'Affection, my dear Julia, makes every air salutary,' replied I: 'you have lady Melville;—but what remains for me, when with yourself you take from me all that makes life desirable?' 'You are unjust to give all your gentle wishes to England,' said Lord Gray; 'reserve a small portion for the continent, they shall be repaid with interest, I assure you.' 'I must ever esteem every one related to Julia, my Lord, in whatever clime heaven may place either

either them or me.'—'Happy they, Miss Villars, who possess your esteem, but doubly blest they, who, like Julia, can boast your affection.' Lady Melville soon joined us; and shortly after the servant announced Lord Castlebrook and Mr. Danvers: those gentlemen remained with us all day. The former, when he addressed Julia, it was with an emotion, that, unexperienced as we were, was not lost upon us. When we were alone I mentioned it, 'It is very true,' said she, 'I observed it, and am pleased he is to remain abroad two or three years: I should not chuse to be continually in company

pany with such an amiable man; perhaps I might humour myself by liking him, while on his side, it might only be unmeaning gallantry. My brother told me this morning he thought of making the tour with him; for Mr. Danvers, he is on his return; but what think you of him, Louisa? for I am sure he thinks of you. Last night when you returned home, he asked mamma your name and family; she informed him the first; but said, I have not the honour to be acquainted with the last. She is an amiable girl, and I sincerely wish she was returning to England, for Julia will leave her heart in the convent.'

‘ Has

‘Has she been long in France?’ said Danvers. ‘Something more than eleven years: she was then about five; Julia and she went under the care of Madame du Saint, the same day.’ He politely thanked the Countess for her information. Now what think you, Louisa? has not this man some reasons for his questions?’—‘I hope not,’ replied I, ‘there is a confidence about him that makes him disagreeable; beside, my dear girl, from my being with you, he may imagine me a girl of fortune; were he assured to the contrary, I dare say, I should not be worth a thought.’

“ In

“ In fine, my dear madam, I was at Lady Melville’s every day for a fortnight; our English visiters, during that space, never omitted paying their compliments to the Countess.

“ One morning, when I went as usual, I found the Countess and Julia alone. ‘I have received a letter concerning you, Louisa, this morning: I may as well inform you of the contents, before Julia; for I suppose you are mistresses of each others secrets; but here’s the letter, let it speak for itself,’ said she, presenting it. It was nearly in these words.

“ I

“ I know not how to apologize
“ for troubling your ladyship ; but
“ my utter ignorance of Miss Villars’s
“ family must plead for me : could
“ you, through your intimacy with
“ the abbess favour me with their
“ address, I would wait on them, and
“ beg permission to lay myself and
“ fortune at the amiable Louisa’s
“ feet.”

“ To this purport was the letter.
‘ Well, Louisa,’ said the Countess,
‘ what think you ?—You may con-
vince Mrs. Masters, when she
comes, you can be well provided
for,

for, without her assistance. Mr. Danvers' estate is large, himself amiable, and I think you can have no objection of informing her, when she returns, of this generous proposal.'

'Believe me, Madam, I am thoroughly sensible of my unhappy dependent state; but, severely as I feel it, I would not change, by repaying Mr. Danvers' generosity with ingratitude; for, young as I am, if I know my own heart, I could not esteem him. Pardon my boldness, Madam, but let me entreat you not to have this affair mentioned to

Mrs.

Mrs. Masters, who doubtless will be glad to get me off her hands. For Mr. Danvers, when he knows I have no one (except your ladyship) who interest themselves about me, beyond the common wants of nature, I hope he will think me unworthy, and forget any little prepossession he may have entertained in my favour.' 'My dear girl,' returned she, 'do not distress yourself, it shall not, if you dislike it, be mentioned. I will answer Mr. Danvers as well as I can.—But I have another proposal to make you: as Mrs. Masters spoke of you as dependent on your guardian, if they

approve

approve it, I will take the trouble off their hands, and think myself much their debtor. I shall desire the abbess to propose it when Mrs. Masters comes, for she has no direction to them; indeed their paying so many years board in advance, had always an air of privacy, as if they feared more frequent payments would put them to the necessity of coming over, or giving drafts, by which they might be known.—

‘ Ah, Madam ! half an hour since I thought Lady Melville could not confer on me more obligations than I had already received ;—but how
can

can I thank you for this last, this generous offer?'——'By saying nothing about it,' said she, 'but wishing Masters may come soon, and accept my proposal. I have not seen Madame du Saint to-day; I will go and talk of this matter with her.'

"Lord Gray, and his friend Castlebrook, came in soon after; the first of those gentlemen appeared thoughtful. 'What is the matter, Augustus?' said Julia. 'I have an extreme pain in my head,' replied he; 'but it will pass off, heed it not., 'Perhaps the air may remove it,' said

said Lord Castlebrook; "what say you to a walk in your own garden?" "I think it would be of essential service to me, if the ladies will favour us with their company?" *Alors done!*" said Julia, "if you promise to return quite well, we agree." Lord Castlebrook immediately offered his hand to Julia. Lord Gray followed his example to me, and we walked into a delightful garden that joined the house.

"I remarked on giving my hand to Lord Gray, he trembled extremely. (Julia and her companion walked gaily on.) Alas! my Lord,

I fear you are worse, I will call Julia back.' 'A moment, I entreat you, charming Miss Villars—pardon me—pardon my abruptness, when I beg you to inform me whether Danvers is happy enough to meet your approbation.' 'He is rather happy, my Lord,' said I, extremely confused, 'in not meeting it; the approbation of an unfortunate, like me, would be of little service to any one.'

'Thanks, amiable Louisa!——
I live, I breath again; were the world Danvers's, I should not envy him, could I but obtain a small portion

portion of that gentle affection which so apparently beams in those heaven-illumined eyes—I then were supremely blest.’ ‘ Forbear, my Lord,’ said I, withdrawing my hand, which as he spoke he prest to his lips; ‘ you forget what is due to yourself and me; if this be the gallantry I have heard is practised in the great world, pray bestow it where it is better understood; think not the favours of Lady Melville, bestowed on one who would encourage her son to behave in a manner unbecoming his rank and future prospects in life.’ ‘ Cruel Louisa, why tell me of favours?—to Lady

Melville

Melville—to the whole world, will I avow my unalterable affection.

“ Lady Julia had reached the end of the walk, and now appeared in sight on her return.” ‘ Come, my Lord,’ said I, ‘ let us haste to meet your sister.’ ‘ Pardon me first,’ returned he, ‘ and do not hate me.’ ‘ Promise to offend no more, and your pardon is granted.’ ‘ Grant me one more request then, and I will promise any thing, and keep my word with the most religious strictness.’—‘ Name it, my Lord.’ ‘ Do not engage yourself to marry any one within this twelve-month.’

month.—‘ I believe I may venture to make that promise without danger (said I, smiling), as I shall remain in the convent that portion of time at least.’

“ Lord Castlebrook and Julia now joined us, and we hastened home to dinner, as it grew near the hour.”

C H A P.

CHAP. X.

LOUISA'S Story continued.

— thou know'st not half the love he bears thee:

Whene'er he speaks of thee, his heart's in flames;

He sends out all his soul in ev'ry word,
And thinks, and talks, and looks like one transported.

Unhappy youth! How will thy coldness raise
Tempest and storms in his afflicted bosom!

ADDISON'S CATO

“THE Countess returned soon after—she had brought home the miniatures. ‘Wear those, my dear girls,’ said she, ‘till you meet again, which I hope will be shortly., We fixed them round each other’s

necks, not without a sigh at the idea of our approaching separation.

“ Mr. Danvers came in soon after; he carefully sought an opportunity to speak to me, which I avoided as much as possible.

“ I gave Julia an item I had something to say to her: and at the time I took my leave, ‘ I wish, madam,’ said she to the Countess, ‘ you would permit me to sleep to night in the convent; I have not half taken leave of some I respect much.’—Go,’ said the indulgent mother,

mother, ' and return with Louisa soon in the morning.

" No sooner were we alone, than I opened my whole heart to Julia, and informed her of my fixed resolution of telling Lady Melville what had passed.' Well,' said she, laughing, ' what can my mother say to it? She, I believe, would be as happy to see you Lady Gray, as Augustus could be to make you so; but my father is a strange mortal, so let the year of probation pass; he cannot steal you out of the convent. My mother, if she knew, out of mistaken duty, might

tell my father, and the poor fellow would lead an ill life, for daring to have a choice that was not made through his spectacles?

“ We chatted best part of the night; and in the morning, after compliments to the abbess, hastened to Lady Melville. ‘ Well, Louisa,’ said she, ‘ I have given Mr. Danvers as genteel a denial as I possibly could, but I fear you will not get quit of him so easily; he regards my saying I am not acquainted with your friends, as an evasive method of excusing myself from favouring his pretensions.’

‘ When

‘ When I am entirely in the convent, as at your Ladship’s departure I shall be; absence will cure so ill-placed a passion.’ Lord Gray entering put an end to our discourse. ‘ I have had letters from England this morning,’ said Lady Melville; ‘ your father, Augustus, thinks you almost at Paris; and indeed it is time you were set out.’—‘ My father, my dear madam, forgets how difficult it is to part from those we love:’ (kissing the Countess’s hand.)—‘ Yet more,’ said she, ‘ he expects us home in a week at farthest; and he would be exceedingly displeased did you

not depart first, so what think you of to-morrow? we must go the day following.' 'What time you please, I shall submit,' said Augustus, sighing; 'but I must send Lord Castlebrook word to prepare, as we go to Paris together.'

" Lord Gray left Abbeville at the time appointed. The evening before, when he attended me as usual to the convent gate, he saluted me respectfully: 'Farewell, Miss Villars; sometimes favour with a place in your remembrance, a man from whom your idea will never be absent.'—'Adieu, my Lord!—
every

every felicity attend you,' said I, ringing at the convent gate, which the portress immediately opening, he threw himself into the coach (which the governess had not quitted on account of a violent shower of rain) and returned home.

"I took care to be rather late in my attendance at Lady Melville's the next morning. Lord Gray was set out more than an hour. Julia was alone, and her eyes still bright with tears. 'I have felt severely to-day,' said she; 'but what shall I suffer to-morrow,'

to part from the sister of my heart? Poor Augustus, too, has by no means a mind at ease; the uncertainty of your situation—fear of finding your affections engaged at his return—all conspire to torment him; for heaven's sake, my dear girl, think of him with kindness; do not love the sister and hate the brother; divide your partiality between us.' 'Good heaven!' said I, interrupting her, 'do I hear you an advocate for disobedience and ingratitude? You own the uncertainty of my situation, yet urge me to encourage Lord Gray to act in a manner that must for ever estrange

estrange him from his parents.
 For shame, Julia! shake off this
 girlish folly, nor let the entreaties
 of your brother, hurried on by a
 youthful passion, make you forget
 what is due to his family and
 honour.'

'Unkind Louisa! what, if pre-
 vailed on by Augustus's sighs to
 step a little aside from duty, and
 plead his passion, were you his
 sister, and I Louisa, would you
 not do as much? I have seen his
 uneasiness some time, and teased
 the cause from him, by promising to
 be his advocate, and to keep his
 secret

secret inviolate ; both which I will strictly perform.

“ We passed the day together ; every little absence of Lady Melville’s Julia employed in interceding for her brother ; and though I would by no means promise her to think of him with tenderness, to you, my dear madam, let every secret of my heart be discovered. I own,’ continued Louisa, deeply blushing, ‘ did my fortune permit, I could esteem Lord Gray beyond all mankind ; nay more, I should have told Julia so had it been an indifferent person, but she loved her brother

too well to keep any thing from him she imagined concerned his peace.

“The next morning separated me from Lady Melville and my friend Julia; painful to this hour is our parting; our voices, interrupted with sighs, could only sob, —farewell Julia, adieu Louisa. The Countess, ever gentle mediator, reminded us Mrs. Masters’s time of coming would soon arrive; that she had no doubt of her offer being accepted, and then we might remain together the rest of our lives. At last they got in the

the carriage—I hid my face that I might not see them depart—Madame du Saint's rhetoric being vain, till tears exhausted my source of sorrow.

“My sweet friend arrived safe in England; often did she favour me with letters; if Augustus was mentioned, it was without particularity, as she well knew the abbess saw all letters that were received by the boarders in the convent.

“Near ten months had passed since their departure; when one day

day I was desired to go down to the parlour; I obeyed, and to my great surprise, found Mrs. Masters, whom I did not expect for two months at least. 'Merciful goodness,' exclaimed she, as I entered, 'how she is grown! I protest she is quite a woman.' Remembering how I displeased her, in her last visit, I accosted her with the greatest respect, which made her observe I was much improved in my manners as well as person; that it was entirely in her power to leave me in the convent three years longer, or take me back to England with her; that, as I seemed to know how to behave myself

myself, she believed she should do the latter. Madame du Saint mentioned the Countess's desire of having me with her, adding I should be equally her care with her own daughter.

“I do not know what answer to give,” said Mrs. Masters, “but will name it to the young lady’s guardian; if he approve it, we can inform the lady on our return. For you, Miss Villars, prepare yourself to leave the convent tomorrow morning, as I shall call for you at that time, and indeed must return to England as soon as

I can a little recover my fatigue.' A bow of obedience was all the answer in my power; but when I saw her depart, my tears found way. 'Alas!' said I, 'where is this woman going to take me? You see, madam, there is no hope of her letting me be with Lady Melville, nay, she fears you esteem me, which makes her determined to hurry my departure. Good God! to what secret horrid place am I going? Would to heaven I could die, and escape both her and him she calls my guardian, for my idea of him is equal to the dislike I have to her.'

'You

“You are unjust, my dear child, to form rash conjectures of those you never saw, by the behaviour of a low-bred woman, who I dare say is nothing more than a servant; think how, in your infant years, the Almighty placed you where you have ever been happy. What have you done to doubt his protection? be virtuous, and you have no cause to fear.”

“Their secret manner of behaviour, my dear madam,” returned I, “is what alarms me; why should even their names be concealed if their deeds were fit to see the light? I
am

am apt to think they would not be
so darkly transacted:

You know, my dear Louisa,
the Countess of Melville, will al-
ways be happy to give you an
asylum should you want it; nay
more, to calm your fears, if any
thing should happen, to render
that inconvenient, return to this
peaceful habitation; though not
greatness, here you shall meet
content. For the present you
must prepare yourself to attend
Mrs. Masters; a visible reluctance
to go with her, at all events, must
injure you in her opinion; appear-
ances

ances are often deceitful, you may be very differently situated to what you expect; and here, my dear Louisa,' continued she, giving me a small paper from her pocket-book, 'is an English note I received in payment, some time since; at all events, it will enable you to reach either the countess or me.'

"It is needless, my dear madam, to repeat to you my thanks to the abbess, or my sorrow at parting from her, for Mrs. Masters was true to her time. My tears, at seeing myself shut on the outside the convent gate, amazed my

my conductress, who exclaimed,
 —‘ Well, bless me, but this is
 surprising; a girl of seventeen
 crying to leave a nunnery!—sure
 you have something more engaging
 than the company of women, and
 those old ones?’ ‘ Yes, Madam,’ said
 I, piqued at her manner of treating
 me, ‘ we have peace, harmony,
 and confidence in each other.’
 ‘ And you have not much in me?’
 but, Miss, let me tell you, after
 what has been done for you, a dif-
 ferent mode of behaviour would
 better become the education be-
 stowed on you; if you were going
 with your Lady Melville, there
 would

would not be all this crying. I suppose.' 'I have the honour to be perfectly acquainted with Lady Melville, madam,' returned I, 'and you, to whom I owe the maintenance of so many years, I have not that pleasure.' 'Well, well, if that be all, we shall be better acquainted by and by; but dry your eyes, for we are almost at our home.' Mrs. Masters resided at the most capital inn in the town; I carefully avoided mentioning I had been out before, for fear of giving her offence. A genteel dinner was provided for us, of which Mrs. Masters, after eating heartily,

ly, and drinking more wine than I thought became a woman, protested she was still much fatigued, and, if I would excuse it, could take a nap. I entreated I might not prevent her; that with her permission I would take a walk the while in a garden I saw from the window. 'Go child,' said she, 'I shall not sleep long.' I obeyed, directing my steps to the garden, which, had they been left to their natural instinct, would have returned to the convent.

C H A P.

C H A P. XI.

LOUISA'S Story continued.

How will my bosom swell with anxious joy,
 When I behold her struggling in my arms,
 With glowing beauty and disorder'd charms;
 While fear and anger, with alternate grace,
 Pant in her breast, and vary in her face.

ADDISON'S CATO.

“ A N arbour terminated my walk; on the bench of which, throwing myself, I gave vent to the feelings of my heart; till suddenly the sound of feet interrupted me, and the moment after presented to my astonished eyes Mr. Danvers!

‘ Am

‘Am I so happy,’ said he, ‘once more to enjoy the pleasure of seeing Miss Villars, without which, I was determined never to quit France! For ten months painful watching, how greatly am I overpaid!’ ‘I had hoped, Sir,’ replied I, ‘when Lady Melville informed you, your affections were so ill placed (as want of birth and fortune must make them) you would have forgot a passion, the object of which can only think respectfully of your generosity.’

‘Unkind Miss Villars!’ returned he; ‘it is your partiality to

Lord Gray makes you refuse doing justice to me—to yourself—for my fortune equals his—my passion none can equal. What else could keep me ten months resident at an inn, where I knew every one that came to the convent must leave their horses, and by that means I might learn your family, or see yourself if you returned to your own country?" "Believe me, Sir," said I, "the friendship I have for Lady Melville, and her amiable daughter, are alone the occasion of what you call partiality to her son; or if I did esteem him I think it needs no apology; but as a friend,

friend, who is now my conductress home, is not apprized of my ever being out of the convent, you will grant me a favour by not noticing your having seen me before.' 'Hard as that condition must be,' said he, 'to any one acquainted with Miss Villars, I acquiesce, but I have already seen your governess, whom I contrived to be introduced to last night; from her I learned she came to fetch home a young lady named Villars, who had resided in this convent something more than twelve years, which, she said, from the time of her entering, she had never quit-

ted ; by that, my charming girl, I found she was unacquainted with your visits to Lady Melville, consequently your secret was safe in my bosom.'

" There was a confidence in his manner made me repent my ever having quitted the convent to visit Julia, as it put me to the disagreeable necessity of being obliged to a man I could not respect. I rose to return to the house as he finished speaking, and attempted to take my leave, thanking him for his generous intentions ; but entreating him to desist from pursuing an object who could never
return

return his passion. 'And will you leave me so?' said he. 'Is this the reward of my ten months painful watching? Is it possible, so fair a bosom should cover an obdurate heart? Thank me, at least, for keeping your secret.' As he spoke he caught me in his arms.

'Keeping my secret would be too dearly paid for, did it subject me to insolence,' said I, breaking from him, and quitting the arbour. He followed me apologizing for his conduct, to which, as I made no answer, by the time we reached the house he appeared as

much dissatisfied with what he termed my pride, as I was with his impertinence.

“ Mrs. Masters, was still sleeping; how much did I wish she was a person to whom I could unbosom myself! Unused to secrecy, how painfully did I feel it! But a dread of her sealed my lips, and I locked up my thoughts in my own breast, rather than participate them with one I could not think my friend.

“ She did not leave me long in my reverie; for, yawning, she protested she was guilty of prodigious rudeness.

rudeness. I really was vain enough to think she was going to apologize to me, but was soon convinced of my error, for, rising and adjusting her cap, she continued, ' You must know, child, last night the landady entreated me to permit an English gentleman to drink tea with us, and, as one is always glad to see our country folks, I readily consented; indeed he was a vast addition to our party, for he is a most agreeable man, and promised me his company this evening. I should be sorry to appear so ill bred as to forget my engagements.' ' Excuse me, madam,' said I, extremely disconcerted to find they were already

so well acquainted—' as the gentleman is to you a stranger, perhaps the engagement is as well broke as kept.'

' Pshaw! you are quite a little prude, and it is ridiculous to be angry with you; time will learn you life.'

' As far as is consistent with prudence, and the dignity of my sex, I hope it will.'

' The dignity of a fiddlestick!' exclaimed she, and began humming a tune: how long she might have exerted her vocal powers I know not, if Mr. Danvers had not been announced. But before I mention this meeting,

meeting, I must give you some idea of the person of Mrs. Masters. She seemed about the age of forty-four, her features appeared to have been tolerably handsome, without ever being strikingly agreeable; or an extreme colour, which spread over her face, and the corpulence of her shape, which took from her every appearance of delicacy, perhaps made me judge too hastily.

“ She received Mr. Danvers with the freedom of an old acquaintance, and the evening, between them, passed joyously. For my part, my utter ignorance of what she termed life,

though it might prevent my shining in their conversation, saved me from comprehending several witticisms inconsistent with the sense allotted to man, and derogatory to the modesty of woman; at least their loud laughs and significant looks, made me judge this was the species of wit, dignified by the name of double entendre. In the course of the evening, Mr. Danvers said he was obliged to return to England in a few days, and entreated permission to see us safe across the water. As Mrs. Masters did not seem to understand the language of denial, leave was soon obtained; for I was too insignificant to be consulted.

“ The

“ The following day we went to Calais, and the next I trod on my native land, and, notwithstanding my long absence, and that before I had knowledge of countries, a pleasing veneration seized me on entering it; every thing gave pleasure, nor did I see a face (except my conductors) but on which (to my thoughts) I could delineate benevolence and virtue.

“ Mrs. Masters had constantly declared her aversion to having any one sleep with her, but permitted me to lay in the same chamber; on the night of our stay at Dover, we could not procure a

room with two beds, as they assured us they were all occupied, but I might have a chamber very near my conductress's; for her, she was so taken up with the attention paid her by Mr. Danvers, that she seemed to forget propriety in her own conduct—no wonder she neglected it to me.

“ It was proposed we should rise early, that we might reach London next day; at which place, Mrs. Masters informed me, she should remain one day, and then continue her journey to the north of England; ‘ there’ said she, ‘ I shall

shall resign my charge." Though I had no bright idea of my guardian, yet was any thing, I thought, to be preferred to her. For Danvers, I began to look on him as one of those men of whom I had read, that suddenly transfer violent passions from one object to another, and pleased myself I was quit of his importunity.

" When we parted for the night, Mrs. Masters desired me to be ready by six at latest; 'for,' continued she, 'we will go sixteen miles before breakfast, by that means we shall be in town early.'

" On

“ On returning to my chamber, I locked my door, and examined every place very carefully; for, though I had hopes Danvers had given me up, I could not cease to fear him.

“ Uneasy thoughts, ever busy when our heads press the pillow, obtruded themselves, and prevented my sleeping; always used to the profoundest tranquillity, the continual bustle and noise of an inn did not a little assist in disturbing me; and I counted the clock strike two, ere I closed my eyes. I slept perfectly sound till the maid, by a gentle tap, informed me

it

it was time to rise: as it was the month of November, and the morning exceeding dark, she brought a light, which, as she gave to my hand, she desired me to speak low, for a lady was very sick in the next room; 'and' continued she, 'the gentlewoman that came with you has been very angry with me for letting you sleep so long; she is dressed, and already below.'

'I made as much haste as possible, and went down to the parlour; Mr. Danvers's servant was standing at the door; 'Mrs. Masters is already in the chaise, miss,' said he, 'and my
master

master on horseback' (the way he travelled). I jumped into the chaise, begging pardon of Mrs. Masters, who, wrapped up in her long cloke and callash, appeared either half asleep, or violently out of humour.

As she made no answer to my apologies, I remained silent for near half an hour, when I was shook from my inattention by a church clock at some distance striking five.

'Bless me, madam,' said I, 'I thought you did not intend to set out till six; it is now only five.' She still made no answer: a kind of horror seized me.—'For God's sake, madam, if I have offended you, pardon
and

and speak to me.' In my energy I caught hold of her hand. 'It is impossible to keep silence when so beautiful a pleader sues,' said the voice of Danvers, whom, to my extreme confusion, I now found to be my companion.

END OF VOL. I.

and speak to me in my energy
caught hold of me. It is
impossible to find when to
beaten a slender line, and the
voice of Danvers, whom, to my ex-
treme confusion, I now found to be
my companion.



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